

Orthodoxy: Christ, Above All

New City Catechism Q.49. Where is Christ now?

Answer: Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after his death and is seated at the right hand of the Father, ruling his kingdom and interceding for us, until he returns to judge and renew the whole world.

He raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- Ephesians 1:20–21

Jesus Christ is above all. The good news revealed by God - that he loves us by rescuing us from his wrath pardoning all our sins, accepting us as righteous in his sight, and giving us an adoptive life in his Son - is founded upon the certainty of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. Jesus did die for our sins, he has been raised from the dead, and he has ascended into heaven, and he is above all to rule until he comes again as judge and to make all things new. He is presently seated at the right hand of the Father in his rule above all.

His rule above all does not mean he's absent from our lives. He rules as one who is with those who trust in him. When Jesus appeared to his disciples after his resurrection from the dead he told them that he would be with them always (Mt.28:20). Though he's out of our sight now, he will never leave or forsake those who live by faith in him (Heb.13:5-6). He laid his life down for his friends (Jn.15:3), and he is closer than a brother (Pr.18:24). Whatever you are going through here on earth Christ in his rule above all sympathizes with your weaknesses and is near to help you calling you to come near his throne of grace.

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. - Hebrews 4:14-16

His rule above does not mean he's indifferent to the world. He rules above as the ruler of all creation. He is in the heavens doing everything he pleases on the earth he created (Ps.115:3). He is not asleep in his reign until he returns. He never slumbers or sleeps (Ps.121:4). He is not silent in his rule of all. He speaks in his pleasure over all he's made upholding the creation in his care (Heb.1:3), and all creation obeys his voice (Ps.147; Mt.8:27). He is over the winds and the rains of the storm. He is over the calm waters as the sun rises over the eastern seas and sets in the western sea. He is over all the peoples of the earth. He has all authority over the righteous and the unrighteous people of the world. His enemies he's putting under his feet (Ps.110:1), and those who belong to him are seated with him in glory (Eph.2:6). He rules over the world interceding and praying for his own church (Heb.7:25). He rules over all, opening the hard hearts of unbelief to believe the good news of his death and resurrection for them, making the sightless eye to see. He is not indifferent to the world that he will one day come to judge and to make new.

Christ is above all, at the right hand of God the Father, but he's not indifferent to our lives. He will return filling the earth with his glory and grace, and until he does, he rules over all to be with all who live by faith in him, filling them with his truth, grace, and the hope of glory.

Christ Covenant Re-Plant Update

Worship Together

We held our first morning worship with our small group at Covenant Road on Sunday August 2nd at 9:30 am. We were led in worship by pastor Jim leading us through the liturgy, and Allen Jones doing music. Our group for August - Paul & Debbie Covington, Ben and Lori Wilkerson, Sue Finch, Sharon Worthy-Boyd, Rob Hubbard, Sammy & Alyssa Eades and family, and Jamie and Judy Thomason (sitting in for Eric & Sarah Williamson for the first week) - enjoyed worshipping together with two visitors. Our visitors came by finding us in their Google search for PCA churches in the Columbia. Thank you Henry Bolin, Cindy Jones, and Andy Markle for your help with our website. Also, Andy Markle has provided two new signs, one at the corner of Covenant Rd & Craig Rd, and one on Covenant Rd nearer to Petersen Hall. This group will continue to meet through August.

Pastor Jim is currently recruiting a group to meet during the month of September. If you're interested and can commit to a month of Sunday worship at 9:30 am please contact the church office.

Our 11:00 am worship at Barnwell St and online continues. There is plenty of space to spread out in the Sanctuary and we'd love to see you there, and encourage you to invite friends to join us in person or online.

Life Together

We are continuing to put a plan together to encourage our community through life together on Sunday mornings and during the week. Look for an update in The Chronicle week of August 24th.

Shepherding Groups will be gathering with one another during the 3rd Quarter. The Peter Shepherding Group had a gathering on Saturday August 1st at Covenant Rd. They enjoyed being with one another around coffee and donuts, and praying together. Be on the look out for an email from your Shepherding Group leadership for your next gathering.

Pastor Jim is continuing Prayer Walks in the neighborhood around Covenant Road on Wednesday and Friday mornings at 7:30 am. He invites you to meet at 3100 Covenant Rd to join him for a 30 minute walk praying around the neighborhood. This is an effort of life and ministry together.

Ministry Together

Once a month CCC members are invited to participate in a ministry together opportunity with a kingdom affiliate in the city of Columbia. On August 1st we participated with A Moment of Hope, an area pro life ministry. We met with the director Mark Baumgartner, and participated in a one hour prayer walk around the block where the Planned Parenthood center is located. We are thankful to have the opportunity to partner with this kingdom affiliate as a church. If you are interested in getting involved with this ministry we would like to continue doing prayer walks on abortion days, but also we'd like to form A Pregnancy Care Team. This is a trained group of women or couples from our church who team up to walk alongside a mother who has chosen life. Over a year, they offer support by:

- hosting a baby shower
- befriending, encouraging, and mentoring
- evangelizing and discipling
- assisting her practically as needed

If you would be interested in being a part of A Pregnancy Care Team please contact Pastor Jim.

Praying for Our Missionaries - Bill & Pam Sweitzer

Bill is a native of Tampa and came to Christ while an enlisted Marine. He attended the University of Rochester through NROTC, and served eight years active duty as an officer. Pam is from South Glens Falls, New York, and came to faith while a student at William Smith College. Bill and Pam married in 1997. After serving as an exchange officer in England, Bill left the Marines to complete his ministerial degree and a doctorate in systematic theology at Edinburgh University. Upon graduation, a British Westminster Confession denomination—the EPCEW—invited Bill to plant a church in the Newcastle metro area that is now All Saints Presbyterian Church. Church plants in Hexham (2015) and Sunderland (2019) followed, but many more are needed. In order to meet that need, Westminster Presbyterian Theological Seminary was started to equip men for the ministry, with a particular focus on preparation for planting churches in the UK and continental Europe. Bill serves as dean and professor of systematic theology while continuing to serve as the minister of All Saints.

Please Pray for:

- ❖ The family as they continue to adjust to “lock down” in England and doing ministry in this ever changing context
- ❖ All Saints Church in Newcastle: it's leadership, worship, community life, and outreach during lockdown
- ❖ The Seminary and Bill's leadership in that endeavor.
- ❖ The church plant in Zurich under the leadership of Florian Weicken: online bible study, support raising, a venue to meet in when restrictions lift, and a growing core group.
- ❖ Provisions of support, financial and prayer, for the work of church planting and the seminary.